

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4, 6 and 13-16 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 4 and 6 are amended. The amendments introduce no new matter as they are supported by the claims as originally filed. Claims 2, 3, 5 and 7-12 are canceled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter recited in those claims. Reconsideration of the application based on the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The Office Action, on page 2, makes final the Election of Species Requirement and indicates that claims 7-12 are withdrawn from further consideration. Claims 7-12 are canceled.

The Office Action, on pages 2 and 3, objects to the drawings as allegedly not showing every feature of the invention. Specifically, the Office Action indicates that the feature angles formed between phase-retarding axis of the liquid crystal films fixed in nematic or discotic hybrid alignment in the first elliptically polarizing plate and the second elliptically polarizing plate of an axis including the distinct viewing direction of the liquid crystal layer, being in a range from +30 degrees to -30 degrees, as recited in claims 3 and 6, is not adequately shown.

The angle in the range from +30 degrees to -30 degrees is shown in Fig. 1 as, for example, θ_3 and θ_5 . These angles are described in the specification as based on the "rubbing axis 41" rather than based on a "distinct viewing direction." Where appropriate, the claims are amended to recite "a rubbing axis of a liquid crystal cell" rather than a "distinct viewing direction of the liquid crystal."

Applicants respectfully submit that this amended claim language clarifies the subject matter recited in the claims and that the features, as recited in the claims, are adequately depicted in the drawings. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

The Office Action, on page 5, indicates that claims 3, 4, 6 and 13-15 recite allowable subject matter. Specifically, the Office Action indicates that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claims and any intervening claims. Applicant appreciates this indication of allowability. The amendments to claims 1, 4 and 6 are undertaken in view of this indication of allowability.

The Office Action, on pages 3 and 4, rejects claims 1, 2, 5 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Patent No. JP 2002-031717 (corresponding to U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2003/0164921 to Uesaka et al.) in view of International Patent Application No. WO 01/88574 (corresponding to U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2003/0218709 to Ito et al.). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

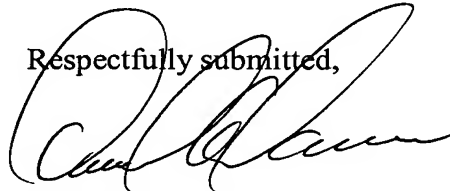
Claim 1 is amended to incorporate the indicated allowable subject matter of claim 3. Claim 6 is rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 1 and 6 are thereby rendered allowable. Claims 2 and 5 are canceled. Claim 16 is also allowable for at least its dependence on allowable claim 1.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of the applied references are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1 and 16, in addition to the indicated allowable subject matter of claims 4, 6 and 13-15, are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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